

Ser. No. 10/635,694

#### Remarks

Claims 1-18 were pending in the application. Claims 1-18 were rejected. No claims were merely objected to and no claims were allowed. By the foregoing amendment, claim 12 is canceled, claims 1, 2, and 13 are amended, and claims 19-24 are added. No new matter is presented.

#### Double Patenting

Claim 11 was objected to under 37 CFR 1.75. Applicants respectfully traverse the objection.

The claims do not "both cover the same thing." For example, claim 14 covers electron beam flash vapor deposition and non-electron beam vapor deposition whereas claim 11 does not.

#### Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(2). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection as to the amended claims.

The "removal" is first referenced in claim 2. Accordingly, claim 12 has been incorporated into claim 1 without reference to the removal. Claim 2, however, has been amended to incorporate the relative order.

#### Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1-7 were rejected as being anticipated by Dibble (US 3574924). Claims 1-7 were rejected as being anticipated by Pratt et al. (US 5038014). Claims 1-4 were rejected as being anticipated by Baumgarten et al. (US 5111570). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections. In view of the incorporation of claim 12 into claim 1, the rejections are believed moot.

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 11, 12, and 15-16 were rejected as being anticipated by Neal et al. (US 2002/0076573). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The mask 60 of Neal et al. was cited as the claimed backing element. The function of a mask is merely to protect areas on which it is not desired to deposit material. The function of a backing element is to facilitate build-up of material. One of ordinary skill in the art would not

Ser. No. 10/635,694

regard the mask as a backing element. Thus, claim 1 should not be regarded as anticipated by Neal et al.

New claim 22 identifies the material as being deposited on the same face of the backing element as is secured to the substrate. Support for this is seen in FIGS. 6 and 7 with the subject face being 53 (an opposite face being 54). This clearly distinguishes a hypothetical application of Neal et al. wherein the aperture surface (e.g., which would extend between faces 53 and 54 if referenced with the same numbers as the present backing element) receives an incidental deposited material.

New claim 23 identifies positioning of the backing element to facilitate the build-up of material in place of the lost material. The mask of Neal et al. does no such thing. Any incidental material within the aperture of the Neal et al. mask is outside the zone of lost material and is, furthermore, removed in final processing.

From the foregoing, it is clear that there is a distinction between the use of the backing element as Applicants intend to claim it and the mask of Neal et al. Accordingly, if the examiner believes the present wording does not distinguish Neal et al., he is requested to provide a telephone interview to discuss appropriate wording.

#### Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dibble, Pratt et al., Baumgarten et al., or Neal et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. In view of the foregoing amendment, the rejection is moot.

Claims 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neal et al. in view of Carl, Jr. et al. (US 6754955). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The copper chill plate of Carl, Jr. et al. was asserted as being the presently-claimed backing element. However, there is no teaching that this plate is applied to the component or that the material builds up on the base surface and this component. FIG. 4 of Carl, Jr. et al. clearly shows this component spaced apart from the weld build-up material 30. This does not appear to be an exploded view because the surface 32 is shown as irregular whereas the adjacent surface of the chill plate 26 is clearly straight (in section). The chill plate may, for example, be positioned to

Ser. No. 10/635,694

block adjacent airfoils from splatter.

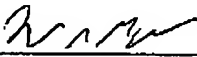
New claim 24 clearly further distinguishes the situation wherein the backing element receives only splatter as opposed to a body of the material being built-up spanning the backing element and substrate. Support for this is clearly seen in FIG. 7.

There is no disclosure in Carl, Jr. et al. of the machining of the deposited material and pre-existing material to create a second base surface and depositing more material atop the second base surface as is specified in claim 13 (see FIG. 8). No citation was made for these steps and these steps would not have been obvious in view of the references individually or in combination.

Claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neal et al. in view of the Movchan article. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. In view of the foregoing amendment, the rejection is moot.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1-11 and 13-24 are in condition for allowance. Please charge any fees or deficiency or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account of record.

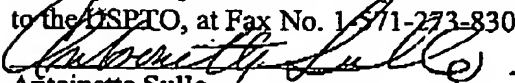
Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted this 11<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2006 to the USPTO, at Fax No. 1-877-273-8300.

  
Antoinette Sullo